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In the Day of Adversity

The Messiah

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CONTENTS

	Page
IN THE DAY OF ADVERSITY.....Sermon by Harry Emerson Fosdick	265
PRAYER.....by Harry Emerson Fosdick	269
THE MESSIAH.....by Walter Henry Hall	271
WHO'S WEALTHY NOW?.....	273
THE KEYS OF THE CITY.....by Margaret T. Applegarth	275
THE LATCHSTRING.....	277
THE GUILD PRESENTS ITS FIRST MUSICAL DRAMA.....	280
DR. FOSDICK OVER THE AIR.....	281
OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS—WHERE THEY GO TO COLLEGE.....	281
BROWN ENVELOPES—AN EDITORIAL.....	282

ILLUSTRATIONS

"LONG, LONG AGO".....	264
THE NEW GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE FROM THE TOWER.....	270
RIVERSIDE DRIVE AT 122ND STREET—1909.....	276
A CHANCEL LANTERN.....	280

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"Long, Long Ago"

THE CHURCH MONTHLY

Volume 6 NOVEMBER, 1931 *Number 1*

In the Day of Adversity

By HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

LONG ago a Hebrew poet in the Book of Ecclesiastes spoke a word that comes keenly home to a time like this: "In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider." To be sure, prosperity is joyful. It enlivens and elates us; we bubble over. Sometimes in prosperous days we bubble over too much, but the day of adversity is sobering and we consider.

That is to say, we ought to. We can let adversity affect us otherwise if we will. It makes some men resentful, some selfish and frivolous, some callous and hard. But we know, without a preacher's telling us, that the ancient seer had the right of it: In the day of adversity consider.

Now, it is a familiar teaching that the courageous facing of adversity develops character far better than the soft enjoyment of prosperity. Character, it has been said, is the sum of all that we have struggled against. No man is worth his salt until he has been tested in the handling of hardship, for whatever virtues may grow in the soil of good fortune there are some which never can grow there—fortitude, patience, constancy, self-sacrifice, courage. These are indigenous to the climate of difficulty.

What we are after this morning, however, is another matter. The experience of difficulty should develop in us not simply strength of character but depth of insight. Some things can be seen in adversity that in prosperity are misty and unclear.

Which do you think goes deeper into life and displays profounder insight into its mystery and meanings: a comic opera like "The Merry Widow" or "Rose-Marie," or a tragedy like "Hamlet" or "Macbeth"? Now, general prosperity long continued and superficially understood and enjoyed can easily become like a comic opera: it makes life dance and sing; it is filled with gay tunes; it has light and color and charm. But we all know that Hamlet and Macbeth and King Lear plunge deeper. They see some things about life that comedy can never see.

Well, this next winter is not going to be a comic opera. This is tragedy and, little to our liking as it is, we may at least, if we will, have this to show for it, that we have seen some things we never saw before.

That often happens in personal experience. Many a time joy has taken you and me by the hand and led us to a height where we have seen things good to know and beautiful to remember. But some day trouble took us by the hand and led us to another outlook altogether and from that point of vantage revealed to us things that joy never could have shown.

This last summer we climbed the Feldberg, the highest mountain in Germany, and, though the path was plainly marked where multitudes had gone before, it was toilsome business enough, what some John Bunyan might have called his Hill Difficulty, but at the summit a reward was waiting, and it was a reward of vision.

Nearly a hundred miles away the whole stretch of the Bernese Oberland stood bravely up and all the well-loved peaks, the Jungfrau, the Matterhorn, the Eiger, the Finsteraarhorn stood clearly forth. Well, when one must climb the Hill Difficulty, as the whole world must climb it now, it were a pity not to get at least this gain from it that we see some things worth seeing.

For one thing, consider in the day of adversity the sacredness of ordinary daily business. In prosperous days business easily becomes a grab-bag. There is so much to be had that we all of us put our fingers down as deep as they will go. We are tempted to think of the economic life merely as a rich chance for each to get something out of for himself. Look back before 1929 and see. There is something about prosperity, when everybody seems to be doing pretty well, when at least the cries of the distressed cannot rise above the shouts of the satisfied and do not clamor at our doors and windows as they do today—there is something about prosperous times that encourages us to think of the economic life as a free field for us to make private profit out of. Then comes adversity.

When the newspapers talk about it they talk about moratoriums and the pound sterling and problems of exchange and all the technicalities of economics. There ought to be one place where something else altogether is said about the matter. In a school in Pennsylvania, so I have read, a little child fainted. The teacher, when she had brought the youngster out of it, asked if she were ill. "No," said the child, "I am hungry." "My dear," said the teacher, "go directly home and eat." "No," said the girl, "today is not my turn to eat; it is my sister's." That is economics and if this day of adversity cannot make us see that fact we are blind. Economic life is not a grab-bag; it is the basic social service of the nation; it is underpinning for our families; it is food for children and education for youth. It ought to be as sacred as the high altar of the church.

We preachers have said that often enough in days of prosperity and have been well laughed at for our pains. But now the world-wide depression is fairly shouting it at us. Economic life has no business to be sordid and pagan. It has no business to be merely a competitive scramble for private wealth. It carries in its hands the physical health and the moral destiny of innumerable people and the life chance of millions of little children. In the day of adversity consider!

What changes in the social structure would be neecessary to express this truth factually I am not sure. Some say that only socialism will do it. Others, like Mr. Swope, would say that socialism would merely transfer the responsibility from individuals to a government composed of precisely the same individuals and that such a way of solving problems would probably make a bad matter worse and that we had better start with the social order we have and improve upon it. Personally, I should incline to the latter opinion.

It is not, however, my business here one way or another to sponsor special economic theories. When the Labor Government was established in England the rumor went about that the King, being presumably a conservative, might not welcome a Labor Government or cooperate with it although the majority of his people had chosen it. And it is said that when the King heard that he retorted, "I would have you understand that no political party has me in its pocket." That is finely said. The King of England has no business to be in any party's pocket. No more has any Christian minister. Neither communism nor socialism nor capitalism should have a minister in its pocket. That is not our function. But our function is to say over and over again that business is sacred, that economic life is always basically a matter of human relationships, that whatever happens there has endless repercussions in hu-

man life, that every public-spirited and cooperative policy established in business registers itself in more decent opportunities for human beings, and that every selfish and sordid policy registers itself in broken homes and blasted childhood.

Nevertheless, in the face of these obviously sacred meanings in business, listen to this. When Gar Wood was being roundly denounced by the American press for that trick by which he seemed at least deliberately to delude his opponent, one American editor wrote this: "If the race was a sporting venture, then Gar Wood should be condemned, but if it was a commercial undertaking, he should be commended." An American newspaper puts it down in black and white that a dirty trick such as would be atrocious in sportsmanship is not only permissible but praiseworthy in business!

That is a lie. That is a lie which honorable business men rightly will resent. That is a lie which does not represent what good business men and women stand for. But, unfortunately, it is a lie which does represent an all too prevalent and utterly pagan idea of what economic life means. And yet, when economic life goes wrong little children say, "Today is not my turn to eat."

Let us not cheat ourselves by any cheap optimism about this present crisis. Here in this rich country we have made our economic life too much a scramble for private wealth. I do not mean business men and women only. They are like the rest of us. We are all the same. We all have made our economic life a grab-bag. It might be worth our while to go down into this depression if we could only come up seeing what ordinary daily business really is. In other realms, in adversity, we find what is real. Some of you this morning hard hit by difficulty are finding out who your real friends are. Some of you wives and husbands, discovering what is most deep and real in family life, are richer in insight even though poorer in things. Strange how in friendship and family life and personal character and public affairs adversity sometimes blows like a stiff northwest wind that leaves things clear!

Look out, then, across this Western world, where millions today are in acute distress or under the terrifying shadow of economic insecurity, and see what daily business really means. It ought to be an organized endeavor to give all the people a chance at life. In the day of adversity consider.

Consider further how obviously and inevitably true it is, as Paul said, that we are all members one of another. Prosperity commonly makes for individualism, sometimes selfish individualism. Put horses into a lush meadow and they will start eating, each one by himself, all over the lot. But let a blizzard come and they will gather into a group for mutual warmth and stand with their heads together. Human beings are like that. Prosperity has a centrifugal influence. It throws individuals and classes apart. But when trouble comes we feel how tightly we all are woven into one human fabric.

There are two kinds of teachers on earth concerning brotherhood: first, prophets, real prophets with moral insight to see in all kinds of weather, fair and foul, that we are brothers. But there is another kind of teacher with the same instruction—infantile paralysis, for example. Infantile paralysis is no respecter of persons. It is the same to rich and poor. It is alike on Park Avenue or in a slum tenement. It crosses all boundaries of race, class, and nation.

Do you remember Carlyle's comment on that Irish widow in Edinburgh with three children, who applied for help and failed to get it, fell ill of typhus instead, infected seventeen others and then died? "The forlorn Irish widow," Carlyle grimly said, "applies to her fellow creatures, 'Behold I am sinking bare of help. I am your sister; one God made us. You must help me.' They answer, 'No, impossible: thou art no sister of ours!' But she proves her sisterhood; her typhus kills *them;* they actually

were her brothers through denying it." That is grimly said but true. So for ages have the prophets been telling us that we all are brethren, but since we would not believe them another teacher now mounts the rostrum. Across all divisions of national life we are brothers in distress. Once we did not care what happened to Germany. Once we fought Germany. We helped starve Germany. We tried to conquer Germany. Now we care what happens to Germany. The world cannot get back to normal again without countries like Germany. Briand and Laval have gone from Paris to Berlin, not because they affectionately love Germany but because a more austere teacher than affection has to be listened to today. We cannot go on without Germany and if, as her leaders fear, she should slip into communism and carry with her Austria and Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia, that would be a situation. Aye, we are brethren and if we will not listen to Christianity about that we will go from one disaster to another and listen to adversity about it.

Indeed, I wonder if Christianity itself did not get its insight about brotherhood out of adversity. Do you suppose that the Christian Gospel would have had that inner moral quality that puts brotherhood at the center if it had grown up and shaped its message in good fortune only? Upon the contrary, the deepest insights of the Christian Gospel come from the Cross. Some half-informed members of modern psychological cults are trying to tell us that Christianity is a soft retreat from life's stern realities, a comforting faith in illusions on the part of those who have not courage to face the tragic facts. From the standpoint of original Christianity what nonsense that is! The Gospel was cradled in adversity; it was suckled on pain. Its central fact is a tragedy. The real reason why mankind, whatever superficial aspects of Christianity it may throw over, keeps ever coming wistfully back again to take another look at it is that Jesus did not see life through prosperous eyes alone but climbed a great Hill Difficulty with a cross on top of it and from there looked upon the world. What one sees from the Hill Difficulty with a cross on top the New Testament makes plain: "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" for "he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth"; "where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all"; "we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another." In the day of adversity consider.

Take one further step and consider how shallow it really is to say that life is quite complete without religious faith. Prosperity encourages self-complacency. As the New Testament puts it, we say "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," but when trouble comes and steadiness and fortitude are needed we do feel the want of interior resources.

In one of our modern novels a wife, leaning heavily upon her husband for moral stamina in a time of difficulty, says to him, "I am not an eight-day clock: I run down within the twenty-four hours. Wind me up, dear." When things are going pretty well we do not acutely feel that need, but when strain is on we run down and need those faiths and hopes, those strong convictions and deep resources which inwardly wind us up.

You recall Marshal Foch's saying that "morale is more important than material." When did he think of saying that? When did that truth come to light so that it broke out in rememberable words? To be sure, in war. For when a struggle is on, morale is more important than material. Ah, my soul! this coming winter we are going to need the things that wind us up.

And irreligion does not do it. Is someone here this morning tempted to go over

(*Continued on page 279*)

Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

ETERNAL SPIRIT, brood over this waiting congregation and as at Thy first creation bring order out of chaos in our souls. Deal with us, not as a group of many people, but one by one. Though we are united in friendships and families, cities and nations, yet in the profoundest experiences of our souls we stand before Thee alone. Alone must we meet our deepest joys, seeking not to be spoiled by them; alone must we meet our deepest griefs, praying not to be embittered by them. Alone we handle our intensest temptations, striving not to be overwhelmed by them. Alone we walk through the deeps of life, and alone we go out through the narrow gate of death.

O God, deal with us this day in the solitariness of our souls and give us strength. Bring order out of the chaos of our anxieties. Rebuke our timidities and fears that they may sink into peace. Bring courage and faith and vision into ascendency. If we have held little things close to our eyes until the whole horizon has been filled with the trivial, give us perspective and horizon, making us wise and strong. Bring order out of the chaos of our turbulent passions and ambitions. Let our good triumph over our evil and our best triumph over our good—the nobilities and excellencies of our characters rising above whatever is base and abominable. Give us the inner spirit of intelligent self-control that we may be henceforth Thy free children.

Bring order out of the chaos of our confused thinking. Let light shine on our path today. Amid practical problems very complicated, amid questions of right and wrong very confused, Thy children cry for light. Let Thy word be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, and may some puzzled spirit who has sought Thy sanctuary see plainly the right road for his feet to take.

Because Thou hast brought order out of the confusion of our inner lives, fit us to be better servants of Thine in bringing order to this bewildered world. For the wisdom, courage, and sympathy which mankind so deeply needs we pray. Send us out, then, empowered for our ministry. Help us to bring a little sanity into the madness of this world. May the touch of Christ upon our spirits make us wise enough to make the world a little wiser. Strengthen us, we beseech Thee, to bring new courage to those whose lives move near our own, an unconquerable faith that despite the bewilderments of this present time love can conquer hate, peace rise triumphant over war, justice prove more powerful than greed, and the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

Give us sympathy that we may give it to the world. May no heart here grow hard and callous in this time of need. Break up the fountains of the great deep of charity in our spirits. Warm our hearts and dedicate our minds that through many opening channels our philanthropy may pour forth in a steady stream to all who want. So grant, we pray Thee, that as by many paths we have come to this place of prayer and by paths so various go forth that only Thine all-seeing eye can trace our divergent ways, coming in need we may go in strength to the praise of the name of Christ. Amen.

THE NEW GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE AS SEEN FROM THE TOWER

We have been watching its progress from the day they started the foundations for the piers until the first day of regular traffic on Sunday, October 25th, when 56,456 vehicles and 33,000 pedestrians shuttled back and forth between New York and New Jersey over this great span.

The Messiah

(We are indebted to Walter Henry Hall, Professor of Church and Choral Music, Columbia University, for the following article on the great Oratorio in the presentation of which he will conduct his chorus on the evening of December 21st.—Editor.)

FOLLOWING the custom inaugurated last season, the Columbia University Chorus will give its performance of the Messiah at the Riverside Church instead of in a concert hall. The environment of a noble building devoted to worship adds immeasurably to the impression on an audience which can be made by an oratorio. This is not surprising. Oratorio has had a serious origin. The word is derived from "Oratory" which used to be that part of a church devoted to prayer and praise, and it was in the oratory of the Church of Santa Maria in Vallicella that Saint Philip Neri provided the first services known as Oratorios. Originally, of course, those services had no particular form, but they were gradually developed, and the first real oratorio was probably by Cavalieri, called La Rappresentazione di Animo e di Corpo.

The Messiah still remains the most popular oratorio that has been written, and although certain musical highbrows do all they can to criticize it, its popularity remains unabated wherever oratorio choruses exist. There is no reason why a reverence and admiration for Bach, which we all approve, should prevent us from recognizing the greatness of Handel, any more than a respect for Shakespeare should prevent appreciation of Milton.

The two eminent composers, in their treatment of great sacred themes, are admittedly different, but in their highest musical expressions not so far apart as some seem to think. We hear, for instance, that Bach's "Saint Matthew Passion" is supremely above Handel's "Messiah," but the two works are so different that it is difficult to compare them. "Bach's 'Passion' is a church service, Handel's 'Messiah' is a poem. Bach deals with facts, Handel with ideas." This quotation is worth consideration. Bach was an earnest and worthy Lutheran, and wrote from the strictest medieval religious standpoint. Handel's work is a universal message to all. He depends but little on doctrinal matters, but with sublime imaginative flights takes his hearers to heaven itself. In the "Messiah" the physical facts of religion are rarely mentioned, and only once with definiteness, and, strange to say, that section, beautiful as it is, is usually omitted. I refer to "He gave His back to the smiters."

Of course Bach, in his great "Passion" reveals fully the glory and immensity of his wonderful genius; no one can doubt that, the only point being that Handel cannot and probably will never be relegated to a musical dust heap.

The modern editions and performances of the "Messiah" would doubtless have surprised Handel, and some of the orchestrations might have produced various examples of his irascibility. It was my good fortune in 1906, during one of my frequent visits to England, to attend a performance in Cambridge, conducted by Dr. A. H. Mann, which was given with the same number of singers and orchestra used by Handel himself. It was a revelation, and although it would be foolish to return to the original arrangements in our modern days, it did much to prove that some of the present editions and orchestral scoring might well be forgotten. We owe much to Ebenezer Prout for his edition, which is modernized but retains the general characteristics set forth by the composer. This is the one which the Columbia University Chorus has used and will continue to use while it remains under its present conductor.

The Overture commences in a glowing, austere manner, picturing a world in darkness and desolation. The following Fugue seems to indicate a promise of relief, but ends with the gloom and austerity. Then comes an effect simple yet almost magical. The key changes from E minor to E major with the phrase leading to the Voice of the Comforter "Comfort ye My People." The work follows in a succession of solos and choruses, some of which may be especially mentioned. The famous bass solo, "Thus Saith the Lord," the rushing, flickering flames of the refiner's fire in the accompaniment which forms such wonderful contrast to the desolating idea in "But who may abide the day of His coming," which precedes it, is especially noteworthy. Strange to say, this was originally sung by an alto, but Handel himself changed it for a bass.

As an illustration of the astonishing versatility of the composer, the well known and loved chorus, "For unto us a Child is born," was taken and developed from an Italian flower song. The Pastorale Symphony, in its pure and naive simplicity, is a picture which all admire. The soprano solo "Rejoice Greatly" is a fine illustration of the fitting use of coloratura, and forms a remarkable contrast to some of the touching and appealing arias. The Chorus, "All we, like sheep," is a colossal picture of the human sheep having the whole world for a pasture and no shepherd, the coda of which is one of the most moving pages in all music, "and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

In "He shall feed His flock" is emphasized the earthly message of comfort, Christ shown as a God of pity; in the number following we hear the celestial application, an invitation to those who labor and are heavy laden to come and "He will give you rest."

In the chorus "Lift up your heads" we hear two angelic choirs asking and answering questions, finally combining in jubilant fashion in "He is the King of Glory, the Lord of Hosts."

Two choruses which are rarely sung, describing the spread of the Gospel, will be included in the performance on December 21st. The first is "The Lord gave the word, great was the company of the preachers"; the second, "Their sound is gone out into all lands" is a dramatic description of the flight of good tidings throughout the world.

One of the most descriptive and dramatic solos in the whole work is the great bass aria, "Why do the nations so furiously rage together?" Here both the solo voice and the accompaniment are fitted with astonishing unanimity to the meaning of the text.

Two numbers which soon follow are probably as well known as any solo or chorus sung throughout the world. The soprano aria, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," is in the repertoire of every oratorio soprano, and no chorus singer is a stranger to the "Hallelujah."

Sometimes the "Hallelujah" is compared with the Sanctus from Bach's B minor mass, but although both numbers are supreme in their own way, they cannot reasonably be compared, as the Bach number represents a celestial choir and the Handel a *human* song of rejoicing.

Because of the addition of several rarely sung numbers, and to prevent undue length of the program, the performance will end with the Hallelujah Chorus, which will be preceded by the aria "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

In the performance of a work like the Messiah, art, important as it is, should be environed with a spiritual atmosphere. The inner meaning and religious significance of the text should be revealed as much as possible. A mere technically correct rendition will never convey to the listeners the great message which is there. Some musical works need only two factors, technique and art, but others require in addition a sense of spiritual perception. Handel's great oratorio belongs to this class. It then becomes an inspiration both to singers and hearers.

Who's Wealthy Now?

A LITTLE more than twenty years ago a young minister and his family were setting up housekeeping in a small town parsonage "up-state." The church treasurer's check came to the minister each week and was made out for the sum of nineteen and 23/100 dollars. With an income of that particular magnitude, some rigid budget plan was obviously necessary. A bit of play spirit was injected into the grim necessities of the program by adopting the 'envelope system," using simple but suggestive designations. Six manila envelopes, securely stapled together, carried these respective labels:

Church Charge—for weekly benevolences,
Household Horde—for housekeeping expenses,
Laundry Lucre—for laundering the clergy's linen,
Wash Wage—for "wash day" expenses,
Fuel Fund—for heat and light,
Save Sack—for books, clothes, travel, vacations.

Into these six envelopes each week went the nineteen dollars and twenty-three cents. One would say at once that that was not wealth. And yet it provided the little family in that time and place with all that was essential for living and when that is said you have at least moved over from any thought of self-pity to a realization of a somewhat preferred status.

And just by way of tempering this picture of rather meagre means, let us give another personal slant to the discussion by citing some elements of real value which did not find a place in the envelopes. The family had some other assets. Oh yes, you are perhaps tempted to say, there were some invested funds on which you were drawing interest and which made it possible to think somewhat playfully of the weekly wage. As a matter of fact, no. For the purposes of this discussion, let us leave out of consideration any more or less hidden assets of that very definite sort. But even when, as was the case with the above family, there is no private income, there are frequently other circumstances that have real value. The situation cannot be dealt with honestly without pointing out that there was an occasional invitation to make a visit "back home," accompanied by a check to pay expenses. That in itself put a different face on the matter and made the nineteen-dollar family look actually wealthy in the eyes of the stay-at-home neighbors, as once or twice a year this family rode out of town in a Pullman car.

Now after the passing of two decades the weekly check is a number of times its former size but the relative position of that particular family has changed very little. They are still wealthy, judged by the same relative values which gave them a sense of security in those distant days.

In this year of 1931, we raise a question for all who read this word to answer for themselves, honestly and intelligently. Are you rich or poor? How are you going to judge the matter? Have you a job? Does your income arrive regularly? If you answer yes to this inquiry, you number yourselves at once with the more fortunate and favored people at this particular time. Many people about you in the land, some millions of them in fact, have no jobs and have seen no sign of income, some for weeks, some for months, and still others for a year or more now. Compared to them, you are rich. If you don't think so, ask some of them and get a realization of how many there are around you who would trade places with you and walk off as though treading on air with the sense of satisfaction and elation at their extreme

good fortune. And all of this is true without regard to what kind of a job you have. Any job is wealth today.

Have you the same job and the same income you have had for the past few years? If you answer yes to this inquiry you will be taking a long step toward classification among the bond holders of other times. The one thing that is likely to have invaded your satisfaction as a salaried person or wage-earner is a sense of insecurity, a fear or dread lest a change of policy or other incident in the economic set-up might take away your position. But here you are in the midst of the greatest economic up-set our generation has known and you personally have not suffered loss. Most assuredly you are rich, probably much richer than you know. To have a job is good, but to have a job that is not greatly affected by these conditions is a very great good fortune.

We are writing these words very frankly for the consideration of people who will, happily, be able to answer the above queries in the affirmative. We ourselves are among them. We submit that such being the case with many of us, it lays a very great responsibility upon us just now. We have been in the habit of taking the benefit of a prosperous time very casually. We have argued that it was no more than right that those who have much should give much. We have despised the profiteer, whether he be of the highly prosperous business man type who looked upon the world "as an orange to be sucked" or the war-time type who cared not at all for suffering doughboys in the trenches just so long as he saw his income mounting. We would not like to fill our pockets with war-time profits and then go on a sight-seeing trip to a hospital for shell-shocked veterans. It will not be much more comfortable for us to move about in the post-depression days, if and when those days come, and realize that we failed to do our part when we were rich and the rest were poor.

So far we have been thinking of ourselves in our positions of relative security and ease as over against our many friends whose means of livelihood, whose jobs have been taken from them. Let us think a bit about ourselves as compared to the group on the other side of us, those favored and fortunate friends whom we have thought of as the well-to-do and the rich. Has our status, as compared to theirs, undergone any change? Most assuredly it has. Great numbers of people who have derived their incomes, even very generous incomes, from so-called investments and have fared sumptuously every day, are looking our way right now with justifiable envy. Something has happened to the system. It isn't what it used to be. We are reminded of the country store philosophers who were discussing a neighbor of whom one of them said, "Bill isn't the man he used to be," to which the other replied, "He never was." Probably the system never was able to give the sense of peace and security that you and I thought it did. Right now peace and security, however real it was, has suffered a frightful shock.

The system may right itself again, though some will argue that if it goes back to where it was before, it will have "wronged" itself. We are confident, however, that it will right itself again. But the individuals involved have no guarantees of any kind that they will again be "sitting pretty" when the tide has turned. The poverty we suffer is never so bad but that there are some mitigating circumstances. Robert Hunter used to say that it is not want but the fear and dread of want, of future want, that is the worst of enemies. Fear and dread are eating at the heart of that group on the other side of us, on the upper side, if you will, which we have thought of as the fairer side. We who inhabit the "safety belt" must not make the mistake of thinking that these people whom we have come to think of as secure cannot suffer, will not suffer. They too have lost their jobs in whole or in part. And more of them may suffer losses, in many cases irreparable losses, before this tide has turned. Are we escaping their plight? And have we some possible chance

(*Continued on page* 281)

The Keys of the City

By Margaret T. Applegarth

G. K. CHESTERTON says that Dickens is a mob! But as one thinks of all the jostling conglomeration of fantastic creatures that haunted his mind, the mob becomes individualized until this one and that one grows distinct and lovable: like Tiny Tim, who thought it must be a special joy to people on Christmas Day to see such a little cripple, because then they could remember Him who had been born that very day to heal the sick!—or like Job Trotter, to whom Mr. Perker's clerk said: "My friend, you've got *the key to the street.*"

A satisfying phrase, that!

For it is this key to the street which the Woman's Society will try to visualize for you in a series of warm-hearted little scenes at the next program meeting on Monday morning, December 7th, at 10:30 o'clock, so that always thereafter, in spite of the maze of streets, in spite of the rows of houses, you may be aware that the keys of this city are not given by the mayor only on notable occasions to various celebrities who will never use them, but also by ourselves—quietly and without flourish or fanfare!—to those in the mob whose feet turn eagerly to certain doors of opportunity. . . .

Speaking of Tiny Tim reminds us that at this season of the year, the Woman's Society, under the direction of Mrs. Marshall Clarke, prepares Christmas boxes to be distributed by our City Mission Society to shut-ins, children, etc. The contents of each indvidual box should not exceed $2 in price and should consist of (1) a piece of wearing apparel, (2) something to amuse, (3) candy or nuts (not fruit, which might spoil before delivery). The box should be attractively wrapped, and surely it would help proper distribution if you pinned a slip on the ribbon stating for what age the box is suited. Packages should be left at the church office by Monday, December 21st, plainly marked for Mrs. Marshall Clarke.

Attention is also called to the fact that the Woman's Society has a Book and Magazine Committee—Mrs. Candlish, chairman—which would welcome any used magazines or books which you may care to leave at the church office on the entrance floor. Such donations are distributed widely and wisely to those on land and sea, lonely and far-flung and in need of something to read. One of the stories this committee will always cherish concerns a small boy who watched the selection and preparation of a shipment of books and magazines to go on the submarine Nautilus on its North Pole expedition, which ended in disaster, as you may recall. One day this summer, the chairman of the committee received an excited telegram from said small boy: "Do you know that the church's submarine was busted?"

By which token you will see that it is quite impossible to render this literary service without a sudden intimacy with hitherto unknown places and persons and enterprises!

—for the Woman's Society.

RIVERSIDE DRIVE AT 122ND STREET—1909

On Monday, November 21st, people of the city were treated to the spectacle of the giant dirigible "Akron" floating majestically over the city with the smaller and slimmer "Los Angeles" following her trail through the sky. The above illustration is its own commentary on the evolution of the dirigible and of fashions. The crowd pictured here, gathered on Riverside Drive immediately in front of the site on which the Riverside Church now stands, was watching the flight of a dirigible over the city during the Hudson-Fulton celebration in 1909.

The Latchstring

AS we recall the people who have been coming and going, in and out of the Riverside Church during the past few weeks, we find that some of them are remembered particularly for what they said here and others primarily for what they represented in the capacity in which they appeared. Among the first group there stand out the friends who have been addressing the Wednesday evening audiences in the course of discussions on "Getting Acquainted with Our City."

Dr. Howard Lee McBain came to us to speak on "What is Happening to Democracy in Our American Cities." His introductory remarks revealed him to be a neighbor of ours and to have some personal interest in the church through his family's representation in the Church School. We confess to being particularly interested in the fact that he could recall the date of the opening of the church by connecting that event with other things that were happening in the neighborhood. We sometimes despair of New York because there seems to be so little of the personal and intimate interest which we associate with smaller communities. But that criticism has no basis in fact. Dr. McBain gave a scholarly and instructive address and revealed in the course of it that he was associating events that occurred in the community about him with intimate family experiences much after the manner in which our grandmothers pegged their calendars with references to measles, whooping cough and "the summer the pump went dry." We came away from this lecture mulling over the inevitable necessity of electing men of character and vision to office under whatever system of political control was in vogue or whatever laws were on the statute books.

Mrs. V. G. Simkhovitch spoke one Wednesday evening on "The Slum—What It Is and What It Does." Here was a woman who knows one of the so-called slum districts of New York "from the inside out" telling her audience in a graphic and sympathetic style that in the case of the slum, familiarity breeds respect and not contempt. She pictured the slum as simply a little world of itself, with some dirt, to be sure, some vice, much of poverty, but with high-mindedness, too, with morals, sacrifice, love, heroism and every other virtue breaking through the particular environment to stand out in real nobility against the false conception which the world in general has of the slum and its people. Many of the quick and superficial criticisms which we are prone to make of the people of the slum districts, such as is found in the oft-repeated phrase "There's plenty of room in the suburbs and country; why do they stay in the city?" found complete refutation in such considerations as these:

One-quarter of all the people in the country live in sub-standard houses anyway.

People are lonely in new spots and if transplanted in middle or late life never again take root socially and so increase their social poverty by going to the country.

Very often the younger people feel the social isolation of the new environment so keenly that they deliberately turn back to the city to spend their evenings and find recreation. Then their last state is worse

than their former one because of the entire lack of supervision.

We left the lecture by Mrs. Simkhovitch convinced that there is one broadly constructive and elementary answer to the real problem of the slum and that that answer is "better housing." The slum has an intelligent, sympathetic and vigorous friend in Mrs. Simkhovitch.

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In Dr. Fosdick's lecture on "Christianity's Stake in Citizenship" in the Wednesday evening series, we got a very clear look at the relationship between religious loyalties and civic loyalties. Loyalty to the City of New York is to be tempered by a loyalty to something which is greater than New York, which sits in judgment on New York and toward which we want to lift New York. Religion cannot excuse itself from civic interest and responsibility on the "keep the church out of politics" plea. What happens to individuals in this world is very much the business of religion. It is plain that the city does things to individuals; that sometimes it does terrible things; that social conditions can well ruin a whole generation of youth. It is the veriest hypocrisy to pretend to be interested in individuals and not to be interested in the social, intellectual and economic life that goes on about them and upon which they depend for growth and life or for stagnation and death.

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"On Sunday following the Morning Service, a group of men from the Men's Class, friends, and others from the congregation at large take dinner together at a nearby restaurant. The place which has been selected for the present is the Dutch Mill Inn, located at 160 Claremont Avenue, only a few minutes' walk north from the church. A luncheon is served at 45 cents a plate, a Sunday dinner at 70 cents. It is not too much to say that you will really feel at home when you eat there with friends from the Class. One of the interesting features is the long table around which everybody may get acquainted." So runs a current invitation to the men of the congregation to join this group for their Sunday dinner.

There are no officers to be elected and no fines imposed when those who usually come are absent. This does not mean that nobody gives a "rap" what happens to the Club. Everybody is concerned. But this concern has never turned itself into a burden. It has always been a pleasure, chiefly no doubt because the Club has fulfilled a need in the lives of a great many men. Nobody welcomes anybody else or talks to anybody else out of a sense of duty. Such things are done spontaneously and with zest. Every man considers himself the chairman of the Hospitality Committee. It is as easy to strike up a conversation around the long table as it is to fall off a log backward. The meal is always a "Dutch treat."

The largest number are present on the first Sunday of each month. This is Communion Sunday at the Church. Instead of going home, which may be quite a distance, many plan to take dinner in the city on this day. There have never been less than ten present at a single dinner, and there have been as many as a hundred. The dinners start when the first one arrives and continue as long as there is anyone left. It would be interesting, as well as revealing, if one could have a stenographic copy of some of the conversations which take place at these weekly gatherings. The range of topics usually begins with Dr. Fosdick's morning sermon and ends—well, your guess is as good as ours.

Each Sunday the names and addresses of the guests are recorded on the back of a menu. It seems that all attempts to purchase a regular guest register have met with disaster due mainly to the fact that the back of the menu has its advantages and so this now has become a hallowed custom of the Club. A glance at the backs of some of these menus shows that visitors have

come from all parts of the United States and many other countries. Some of them sign: Los Angeles; Washington, D. C.; Toppenish, Washington; Hackensack, N. J.; Vincennes, Indiana; Cleveland, Ohio; American Mission in Constantinople; Quanah, Texas; Kansas City, and Minneapolis. Frequently letters are received the following week, expressing appreciation of the fellowship found in this group.

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We met a sister of one of the Catholic Orders in the middle aisle of the church here recently, accompanied by a friend with whom she had come to satisfy her interest in the architecture and symbolism of the building. We were pleased to have the privilege of showing these friends up into the chancel where they were particularly interested in the carved wood of the choir stalls and in the sculptured stone of the chancel screen. The visit of these particular friends was not at all an isolated instance of interest in the architecture here upon the part of priests, sisters, and others whose background is in the Roman Catholic Church. And it is most evident that no other class of visitors has anything like the quick and intelligent appreciation of beauty in an ecclesiastical setting as do the Catholic people. It is very evident that the great cathedrals and beautiful churches in which they have been worshiping through the centuries, combined with the esthetic appeal of their service, has done something for them, has definitely contributed to their love for the beautiful as well as to their appreciation of goodness and truth.

What we have observed here in connection with the interest of our Catholic friends leads us to query whether the glories of the cathedrals has created the capacity for appreciation or the people's innate love of loveliness given birth to the cathedrals. It is probably a complementary process. In any case we are free to confess our hope that something akin to the attitude of the Catholic people toward these matters may take hold of the Protestant people.

In the Day of Adversity

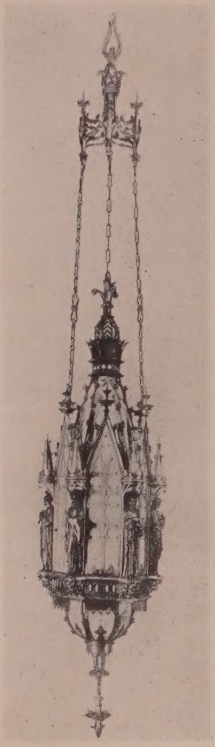
(*Continued from page* 268)

to irreligion? Whatever else you say about it, you must acknowledge that it does not spiritually wind you up. To believe that the whole universe is haphazard chance, that man, as James Branch Cabell, the novelist, has said, is merely "a parasite infesting the epidermis of a midge among the planets," to think that life has no spiritual source, no spiritual goal, and no essentially spiritual meaning, that does not wind you up, but runs you down.

Look at a man like Theodore Dreiser, the novelist, able, acute, intelligent, honest, fine-spirited, saying that he spends a good deal of his time thinking about the meaning of life and cannot see any meaning in it, all a mess, a phantasmagoria of futility, and so "pass as I came, confused and dismayed," and you see incarnate a consequence of contemporaneous irreligion which is evident on every side of us. It does not necessarily make a man bad but it does run a man down.

On the other side, some of us would bear witness to the way our faith in God revealed in Christ does wind us up. Mark it! Fish cannot live without air. That is not the obvious thing to say; the obvious thing to say is that fish cannot live without water. But around that obvious thing, interpenetrating it, giving meaning to it, is the larger truth: fish cannot live without air. The vital elements in water come from air. Shut off air and water would support no life. So some of us, like all mankind, are immersed in human environment, impinged upon by this earthly matrix, but we really live by another realm altogether—spiritual meanings. Invisible! you say. Aye, like air. Impalpable! you say. Aye, like air, but just as real, just as indispensable, just as vital! "He restoreth my soul." He winds me up.

I challenge you, therefore, to this year's work in this church. It is tremendously worth doing. All daily business sacred, all



A CHANCEL LANTERN

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mankind brethren, the soul's need of God profound—in the day of adversity consider!

PRAYER

Eternal God, our Father, save us from living cheaply in a serious generation. Lift us up above the show of things and give us vision and insight. Grant, we pray Thee, that we may not live in a time when such real things are to be settled and never discover what is real at all. O Christ, do Thou indeed become very real to us this year. Amen.

Dr. Fosdick preached the foregoing sermon on October 4, 1931.

The Guild Presents Its First Musical Drama

Sunday evening, December the sixth, the Assembly Hall will be the setting for a musical drama, the fruit of almost eight weeks' practicing and rehearsing by Guild people, under the direction of Mr. Milligan. Everyone knows the old Hebrew legend of Esther. the story of the courage and faith of a Jewish captive girl during a critical period in the history of her race. The dramatized story will be interpreted by a chorus, assisted by dancers and players.

The three December programs following "Esther" will present interpretations of the meaning of the Christmas story in modern life. The second of this series will be the Christmas story in pantomime, entitled "At the Door of the Inn," by Martha Race. Miss Martha Biehle of the Guild, who produced the pantomime last year, is again in charge of the production. Not only is the message of the pantomime easily understandable, but the setting has unusual beauty. Charles Rann Kennedy's play, "The Chastening," depicting the boyhood of Christ, completes the Christmas cycle.

The program, as it stands at the time of writing, can be summarized briefly:

December 6—"Esther," a musical drama.

December 13—A Christmas Litany and Worship Service.

December 20—"At the Door of the Inn," a Christmas pantomime.

December 27—"The Chastening," by Charles Rann Kennedy.

The Guild services are presented in the Assembly Hall at 7:30 o'clock. Everyone is welcome to participate. The Guild will be glad to receive, through its executive secretary, Mrs. Lucille Vandiver, any suggestions or ideas for its services which may have formulated in the minds of those who come on Sunday evenings to worship.

Dr. Fosdick Over the Air

The National Vesper Service in which Dr. Fosdick is being heard on Sundays over the air is held at 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon. For the convenience of people who are present at the church on Sunday afternoons, the service is reproduced in the Chapel regularly and is being largely attended. The following forty-three stations are carrying this service at the present time:

WJZ—New York, N. Y.
WHAM—Rochester, N. Y.
WBZ—Springfield, Mass.
WBZA—Boston, Mass.
KDKA—Pittsburgh, Pa.
WBAL—Baltimore, Md.
WRVA—Richmond, Va.
WPTF—Raleigh, N. C.
WWNC—Asheville, N. C.
WIS—Columbia, S. C.
WSB—Atlanta, Ga.
WIOD—Miami Beach, Fla.
WFLA—St. Petersburg, Fla.
WSUN—Clearwater, Fla.
WMAQ—Chicago, Ill.
WIBA—Madison, Wis.
WEBC—Superior, Wis.
WEBC—Duluth, Minn.
KSTP—Minneapolis, Minn.
KSTP—St. Paul, Minn.
WDAY—Fargo, N. Dak.
KFYR—Bismarck, N. Dak.
KFAB—Lincoln, Neb.
KSL—Salt Lake City, Utah
KWK—St. Louis, Mo.
WREN—Kansas City, Mo.
WJDX—Jackson, Miss.
WSMB—New Orleans, La.
WSM—Nashville, Tenn.
KTHS—Hot Springs, Ark.
WKY—Oklahoma City, Okla.
KVOO—Tulsa, Okla.
KPRC—Houston, Tex.
WOAI—San Antonio, Tex.
WFAA—Dallas, Tex.
KGO—San Francisco, Cal.
KFI—Los Angeles, Cal.
KFSD—San Diego, Cal.
KOMO—Seattle, Wash.
KHQ—Spokane, Wash.
KGW—Portland, Ore.
WJAX—Jacksonville, Fla.
KTAR—Phoenix, Ariz.

Who Is Wealthy Now?

(*Continued from page 274*)

of escaping it completely and coming up on the top side of this situation with nineteen dollars to distribute in the weekly envelope and a trip in a Pullman car now and then? If so, we are rich, whether we are looking to the left of us where the jobless are or to the right of us where the bankrupt are.

We grant you that all of this is predicated upon the assumption that your present situation will be maintained. We don't know whether it will be or not. We simply say that in such a crisis they are rich who are employed and that they must act accordingly, even as heretofore we have expected that they who were wealthy would act that way, even though now it may be they are poor again.

Our Sons and Daughters

Where They Go to School and College

A large contingent of the young people from the families of the Riverside Church is of course enrolled in the schools and colleges here in the City of New York. Our mailing list reveals that in addition to Columbia University, Barnard, Teachers College and other neighboring institutions, our young people are represented in more than thirty different schools, as widely separated as New Hampshire and Wisconsin. In some of the schools we have only one representative, while in others, such as Yale, Swarthmore and Barnard we have eight or ten in each. Following is the list: Asheville School, Barnard, Bowdoin, Berkshire School, Brown, Colgate, Columbia, Connecticut College, Cornell, Dartmouth, Deerfield Academy, Denison, Goucher, Groton, Harvard, Hill School, Mt. Holyoke, New Jersey College for Women Oberlin, Ogontz, Phillips Andover, Phillips Exeter, Pratt Institute, Princeton, Salisbury School, Shurtleff, Smith, Swarthmore, Taft, University of Wisconsin, Vassar, Wellesley, Yale.

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Brown Envelopes

At this particular time in The Riverside Church a "brown envelope" is a reminder of our attempt to get the people of the congregation to contribute odd sums, as may be possible, to the Emergency Unemployment Relief. So it has come about that these envelopes are to be found on the dressing tables and in the living-rooms of our homes, receiving the crumbs, as it were, that may be dropped in.

Today one of these brown envelopes was returned. It came from a nearby orphanage where there are fifty little children who have as spending money each month a total of twenty-five dollars, fifty or seventy-five cents each for the older children according to the "merits" involved, and ten cents each to the little tots. The envelope was given to this fatherless and motherless family as a suggestion that they had something to be thankful for and were better off than some others. The envelope reposed in its place in that particular living-room less than three weeks. The only hands that put anything into it were the hands of little children whose quiet visits to it were unannounced and whose contributions were made without further solicitation than was implied in the bare announcement. This "brown envelope" contains five dollars and ninety cents. We confess to an attitude of reverence toward it as it rests here upon our desk.